

CPYRGHT

~~Miro Cardona Waits~~

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# 'Tried Not to Think Of My Own Son ...'

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By CHARLES WHITED  
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Jose Miro Cardona, the man who sent them to the Bay of Pigs, popped a green and yellow pill into his mouth moments before the first plane-load of liberated prisoners slid out of the evening sky.

"For two years I have fought Castro, and I have tried not to think of my son," he said. "Not in any way. I was thinking of the boys who die and go to prison."

A cigaret appeared, a glow of fire in his face, then quick, nervous puffs billowed around the heavy Cuban spectacles of the president of the Cuban Revolutionary Council.

As the crowd gathered on the concrete apron at Homestead Air Force Base, his eyes watched from dark shells.

"Now," he said, "I cannot

talk well. I am, now you say, unbalanced ..."

Since 7 a.m., Miro and other fathers among the exile leaders had cooled their heels at the base.

Dr. Miro measured off the hours in a conference room of headquarters. He made one appearance during the afternoon, but said little and soon returned to his retreat.

He did not talk then of Jose Miro Torres, 34, the father of four who went as a soldier only to rot with his comrades in Castro's prisons, with a ransom of \$50,000 on his head.

But when the first plane came, Dr. Miro stood at the foot of the steps with the other exile leaders. He waved and he wept.

And as the 107 men filed down, one by one in the glare of television lights, he gathered each into a back-pounding Latin abrazo, so vigorous that his glasses almost tumbled off.

Jose was not on the first plane.

He turned away, removed his glasses and wiped them with a handkerchief. "The next plane," he said. "One of them said he was on the next plane."

When it came, he rocked on his heels, scanning the windows, and then each face as it passed.

It was the same when the third came, and the fourth, and he waited still.